sector facing competition from child labour in the sector;

(b) whether discussions have been held with State Governments to detect and stop enrolment of child labour;

(c) if so, the details of such discussions;

(d) whether funds would be given to non-governmental agencies to reduce involvement of child labour in this sectors; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Employment of children, below the age of 14 years is prohibited in beedi industrial premises under the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1996 as also under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

(b) and (c) Govrnment have been discussing the issue of child labour and their rehabilitation with the State Governments in various formus, from time to time. Recently, a conference of the State Labour Minsters was held on 7-8the July, 1997 to review the progress in the implementation of the directives of the Supreme Court on child labour. The review revealed that the first phase of the survey on child labour in most of the States/ UTs had been completed and action has been initiated to give effect to the directions of the Supreme Court.

(d) and (e) Under the existing National Child Project Scheme, the Central Government is fully funding child labour projects at district level. The Special Schools run under the project, for the rehabilitation of Children Withdrawn from hazardous occupations including beedi sector, are in many cases managed by NGOs. NGOs are also eligible to get financial assistance under the Grant in Aid Scheme and also under the IPEC project of the ILO.

Payment of Wages and retirement benefits to employes of PSUs

1794. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the details concerning the failure of Government to meet its contractual obligation with respect to payment of wages and retirement benefits to employees of public sector undertaking;

(b) the reasons for Government's failure to meet its legal liabilities; and

(c) whether Government have been served with any notice of civil or criminal proceedings for their failure in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STAE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABNOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Due to cash losses many of the public sector undertakings are not in a position to pay the wages and other statutory dues to their employees. Ministry of Labour has already taken up the mater with concerned Ministries as well as Ministry of Finance so that the funds are made available in time for payment of salary and other statutory dues to the workers of sick PSUs.

(c) No, Sir.

Abolition of Ceiling Limit on Bonus

1795. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to increase the minimum bonus by abolishing the ceiling limit and amending the Payment of Bonus Act; and

(b) if os, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINSTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.